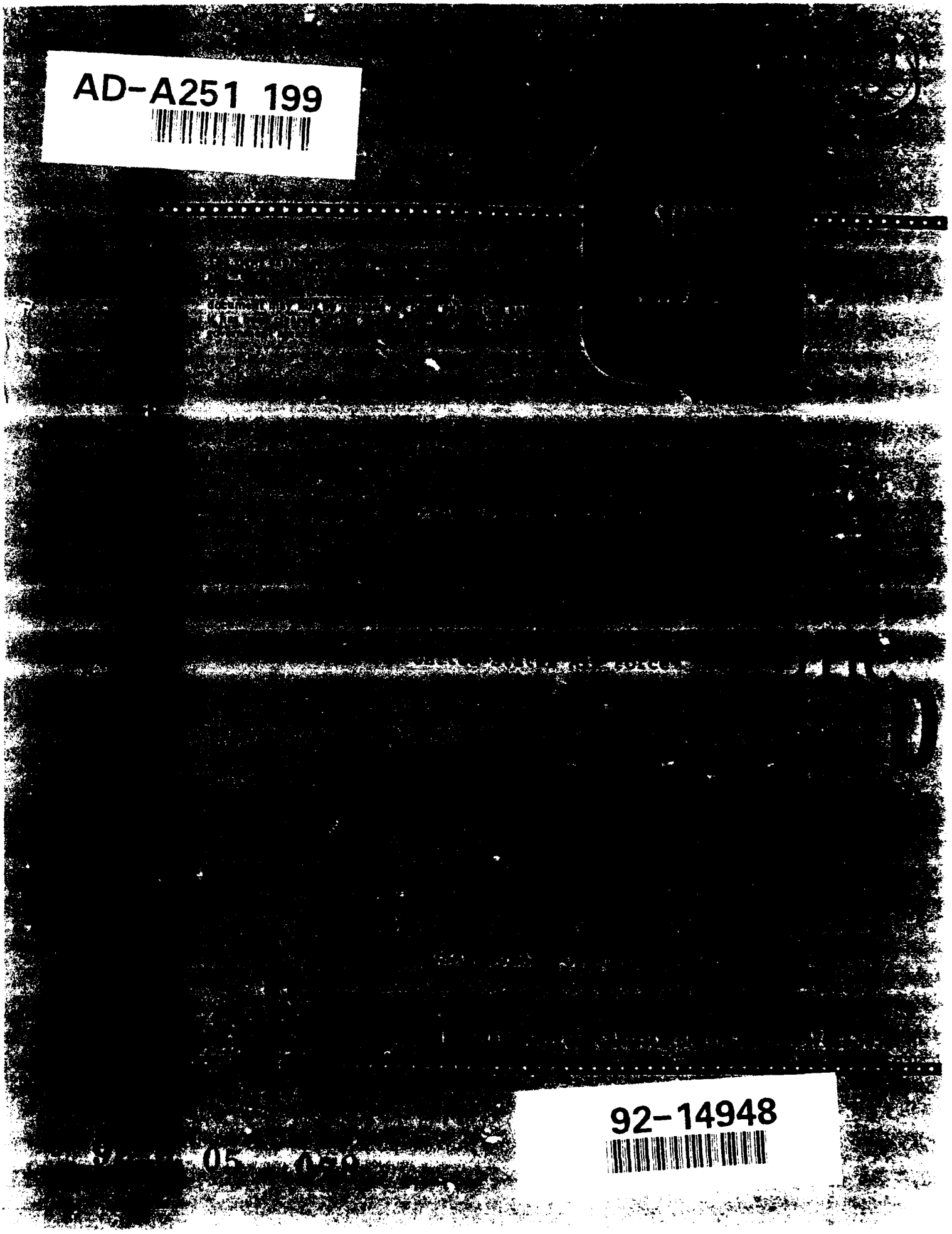

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The lynchpin of proper strategic response in time of developing crisis is not forces available, target sets or diplomatic access. The key is understanding who makes the key decisions and how those decisions are made at the national level. The national security decisionmaking of a nation is the centerpiece of its strategic vision, forces and conduct. It is arguably the single most important element in predicting national behavior. This paper examines the national security decisionmaking of the former Soviet Union and Israel relative to their respective invasions of Afghanistan in 1979 and Lebanon in 1982. The study analyzes the respective national security decisionmaking systems, the strategic setting for both invasions, the decisions to invade and the outcomes. In both cases, imbalanced information and constricted interaction between key personalities and factions short-circuited the decisionmaking process. Both nations, not recognizing the inherent flaws in their systems that eliminated institutional checks and balances, made bad decisions based on bad policy. American and allied national security decisionmakers should heed the lessons derived from these cases.

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM

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THE DECISION TO FIGHT

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

BY

COLONEL SAMUEL H. CLOVIS JR.
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

COLONEL (RET) DAVID JABLONSKY
PROJECT ADVISOR

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ABSTRACT

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The lynchpin of proper strategic response in time of developing crisis is not forces available, target sets or diplomatic access. The key is understanding who makes the key decisions and how those decisions are made at the national level. The national security decisionmaking of a nation is the centerpiece of its strategic vision, forces and conduct. It is arguably the single most important element in predicting national behavior. This paper examines the national security decisionmaking of the former Soviet Union and Israel relative to their respective invasions of Afghanistan in 1979 and Lebanon in 1982. The study analyzes the respective national security decisionmaking systems, the strategic setting for both invasions, the decisions to invade and the outcomes. In both cases, imbalanced information and constricted interaction between key personalities and factions short-circuited the decisionmaking process. Both nations, not recognizing the inherent flaws in their systems that eliminated institutional checks and balances, made bad decisions based on bad policy. American and allied national security decisionmakers should heed the lessons derived from these cases.

INTRODUCTION

The United States finds itself the sole superpower remaining and has the responsibility to police, to the extent possible, this uncertain world. Conflicts will occur, and seemingly unrelated events may emerge together as serious matters. These events may elevate a conflict from a matter of major interest to one of vital or survival interest for this country or an ally. Recent events in the Persian Gulf stand as testimony to this fact.

In the face of downsizing in the military, domestic problems, electoral politics, uncertain alliances and a seeming lack of focus, the United States may not be prepared to shoulder its responsibility as the sole superpower, because the national security decisionmakers will not be able to respond. If history is any guide, this country and its national security decisionmaking apparatus will not be able to function in a crisis situation because decisionmakers will not be prepared. They will not understand the environment, will be ignorant of crucial facts, will "mirror image" and will make mistakes, because they will not have learned the lessons of history.

The lynchpin of proper strategic response in times of developing crisis is not forces available, target sets or diplomatic access. The key is understanding who makes decisions and how those decisions are made. The national security decisionmaking of a nation is the centerpiece of its strategic vision, forces and conduct. It is perhaps the single most important element in predicting national behavior. Therefore, by researching the critical security decisions of other nations, current and future U.S. decisionmakers can learn valuable lessons. Armed with the insights of history, then, the decisionmaker can scrutinize his own apparatus for national security decisionmaking and perhaps prevent the

formulation of flawed policy and preclude ill-advised decisions.

The purpose of this paper is to provide historical insight into the national security decisionmaking of two nations-- the former Soviet Union and Israel. The Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan in 1979 and the Israeli decision to invade Lebanon in 1982 will be examined. The national security decisionmaking apparatus and process will be described for both case studies. Next will be a description of the strategic setting, providing historical background for the decision to fight. With the strategic setting established, the actual decision to invade will be examined. In this section, not only the "who" but the "how" of the decision will be scrutinized. Following the analysis of the decision will be a presentation on the outcomes of the decisions and the legacies left behind. The final section of the paper will offer the lessons gleaned from the examination of these cases and the implications for current and future players in the process of national security decisionmaking for the United States.

THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN, 1979

Soviet National Security Decisionmaking

National security decisionmaking in the former Soviet Union evolved from monolithic dictate at the hands of Stalin to a form of bureaucratic consensus under Leonid Breshnev. The system of decisionmaking was comprised of relatively stable and long lived fundamentals derived from Russian history, Bolshevik principles and learned behavior. The system was essentially two-tiered. The lower level consisted of the bureaucrats that provided information, did the staff work and implemented the decisions of the upper level actors. The higher tier, of course, was where the power was vested and policy and decisions were made. This level was comprised of the Central Committee and its Secretariat, the Politburo, and the smallest (and perhaps most powerful) body known as the

Defense Council.[1]

Members of these groups represented various interests. In addition to reflecting individual human nature, education, experience and values they were also linked back to certain constituencies in the Communist Party. Information flowed up, positions were synthesized and bureaucratic interaction took place. Compromise was not a characteristic, but winning and losing was. Therefore, consensus was reached when a grouping of representatives whose shared goals overcame individual functionalist goals.[2]

The dominating principle of this process was democratic centralism. Developed by Lenin and refined throughout the history of the Soviet Union, this principle imposed the unanimity of decisions on the system. As such, when debate on an issue was complete and a decision was rendered, there were no dissenting voices and little chance to alter that decision. The next lower body was never aware of the intricacies of a debate, nor would that body have requested clarification.[3]

The first level in the upper tier of Soviet national security decisionmaking was the Central Committee. The Central Committee was elected from and by the members of the party congress. Though not truly a legislative body, it was an assembly of representatives of all factions of the Communist Party. The committee's roughly 330 full and candidate members came from every facet of party life --industry, military, agriculture, science, the arts and various geographic regions. Originally elected in Lenin's time to do the day to day business of the party, by the time Breshnev had consolidated power in the mid-1960's the group was used to legitimize policy and act as a sounding board during the bureaucratic development of policy.[4]

Another organ in the upper tier of the Soviet decisionmaking system was the Politburo. The members of this organization, elected by and from the Central Committee, were the political elites of the Soviet Union. The people who filled

the approximately 24 positions of the Politburo constituted the true government. This body decided national priorities, allocated resources and defined broad governmental policies. At its head was the General Secretary. During Stalin's rule, this body was nothing more than a grouping of associates and aides with little influence or power. Two decades later, Breshnev dismantled this legacy of the past and established a supreme legislative-executive committee of the ruling elites representing all of the principle power groups.[5]

The next level of party apparatus was the Secretariat of the Central Committee. Headed by the General Secretary, these 10-12 individuals supervised the various departments of the Central Committee. All of these individuals were Politburo members, and as members of the Secretariat, directly influenced party plenum composition. This ability to influence party operation inspired fierce loyalty from below.[6]

Although the Politburo had the most visible influence on the overall governance of the Soviet Union, a separate mysterious and enigmatic body -- the Defense Council -- wielded considerable power. Officially, this body was appointed by, and was responsible to, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. However, because its members were the most powerful of the ruling elites (General Secretary, foreign minister, defense minister, head of the KGB and selected Central Committee secretaries), the Defense Council had oppressive influence on all aspects of national security decisionmaking and had the potential of being the quintessential council of war. These men shared common values, virtues, experience and views of Soviet history.[7]

The defense of Mother Russia has been historically the single greatest priority for the rulers of the Russian/Soviet empire. During the eighteen years of Breshnev's hold on power, however, the Soviet Union gradually made the transition from a continental empire into a truly global military power. Bolstered by military successes in Angola, Somalia, Ethiopia and, most notably, Czechoslovakia,

the Soviet Union came to rely on, and be convinced of, the utility of the military instrument of national power in international operations. The willingness to use military forces in the international arena would expose flaws in Soviet national decisionmaking long hidden by the nature, system and character of the decisionmaking process.[8]

Strategic Setting

Afghanistan is a barren, mountainous country formed in the 19th and 20th century by the interaction of Great Britain and Imperial Russia "playing" the "Great Game." The borders were established with little regard for natural or tribal boundaries. No complete census has ever been performed, but the estimated 15,000,000 people are comprised of several ethnic groups. The majority of Afghans are Pushtuns, a hardy and fiercely independent people. Other ethnic groups are the Tajiks, Uzbeks and Baluchis, all with major ties that transcend the borders of the former Soviet Union, Pakistan, and Iran. Establishing a national identity for Afghanistan has been problematical due to the detrimental influences of tribe and clan allegiance. The one unifying factor is religion. Ninety percent of the Afghans is fiercely Sunni muslim.[9]

Over the course of history, Afghanistan was ruled by various forms of monarchy. The goals of these monarchs were the desire to modernize the country and to unify the governance of the tribes particularly the Pushtuns. After British withdrawal following World War II, the Afghan rulers worried about internal security and external pressure from the Soviet Union. The United States was cordial, but offered little help, expressing the opinion that America had no strategic interest in the region. The Afghans, then, were left no alternatives but to seek accommodation with the Soviet Union.[10]

Between 1963 and 1973, King Zahir Shah attempted to guide the transition for Afghanistan from a traditional royal dictatorship into a modern constitutional

monarchy. In spite of his forward vision, his efforts failed. The country was not prepared for self-rule, he was hesitant in permitting the development of essential institutions for a popular government, and his government was plagued by endemic administrative incompetency. During this period, however, the King did allow the development of several political factions including those ideologically aligned with the Soviet Union.

On January 1, 1965, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was formed by Nur Mohammad Taraki (the Soviet contact man in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan) and the infamous Babrak Karmal. Taraki was an introverted, self-made man-- a writer and a dreamer, easily drawn to communism because of his concerns for social justice. He headed the Khalqi (Masses) branch of the PDPA. The Khalqi were true revolutionaries and attracted many army officers to their camp.[11]

Another political faction of the PDPA was formed by Babrak Karmal, a member of the Afghan aristocracy and the son of a famous Afghan general. Karmal was raised in a permissive environment and gravitated to political activities. He sought a political career to gain power and as a result was never truly obsessed with any burning ideology. After the initial PDPA organization in 1965, Karmal felt constrained by the Khalqi dogma and formed the Parcham (Banner) branch of the PDPA in 1968. His experience as a governmental bureaucrat led him to build a more structured party apparatus. The Parcham attracted mostly students, intellectuals and government bureaucrats.[12]

While King Zahir Shah was away from the country, the weight of his ineffective rule precipitated a nearly bloodless coup on 17 July 1973. The leader of the coup was Prince Mohammed Daoud, a general and former prime minister, who immediately pursued an aggressive, genuine form of nonalignment for Afghanistan. Daoud was not a frontman for any political faction but his own; nevertheless, he was strongly supported by PDPA affiliated officers of the army

during the coup.[13]

Soviet attention to Afghanistan increased in 1975 as Daoud tried to strengthen Afghanistan's nonaligned position. Daoud's efforts went so far as to attempt to wrest control of the nonaligned movement from Cuba. These activities severely aggravated the Soviets. As a consequence, the Soviet Union began active involvement in the PDPA, demanding reunification of the factiousness party and more activity by the PDPA in Afghanistan politics.[14]

The result was the Saur (April) revolution that began on 27 April 1978 when pro-PDPA forces assaulted the royal palace and succeeded in killing Daoud. By 30 April 1978, Nur M. Taraki, had consolidated PDPA power and was declared head of state with Babrak Karmal as his deputy prime minister. Hafizulla Amin, a close associate and ideologue for Taraki, was named foreign minister and moved into the number three position behind Taraki and Karmal. It was unclear if there had been Soviet complicity in the coup, but it was quite clear the Soviets had known of the plan.[15]

There were two significant points about the Saur revolution. First, the PDPA was small and did not represent the majority of the Afghan people. Nevertheless, the Communists were a powerful minority and had control of key army units and government bureaucracies. There were no other constituencies to contest PDPA claims to power. Second, the coup was very similar to the Bolshevik October Revolution of 1917 in that the PDPA participated in the overthrow of a despotic regime, not in a popular uprising.

The Saur revolution influenced Soviet regional policy. Encouraged by the coup in Afghanistan (believing the Saur revolution paralleled the previous occurrences in Ethiopia and Angola), the Soviet leaders believed they had established favorable security conditions in the region. The Soviets had in power in Afghanistan a known ally in Taraki. However, the installation of a Soviet-backed Communist

government did not guarantee stability in Afghanistan. Almost immediately, the results of the Saur revolution began to place pressure on the Soviet decisionmaking apparatus.

The Decision

As early as July of 1978, the Khalqi faction, under Taraki and Amin, began to dismantle the Parchami opposition by sending its leaders to other nations as ambassadors. Among the victims was Babrak Karmal who, rather than face an uncertain life in Afghanistan, accepted his exile to Czechoslovakia. The purges of July and August ousted the Parchami from the Army, thus leaving the Khalqi with virtual control over all aspects of Afghan life. The new Khalqi regime, however, was less enlightened than was first believed; and the regime's policies only aggravated an already fragile situation by imposing anti-usury laws, attempting to institute land reform, imposing regulations on dowry actions, giving women equal rights and replacing the green Islamic flag with a red one. These actions alienated the landowners, the conservative clergy, the Parchami, the historically xenophobic Afghans and thousands of soldiers who deserted after the coup and subsequent purges.[17]

In early 1979, the oppressive Khalqi regime became internally dysfunctional and slipped away from Soviet control. During the second week of February in 1979, the Shah of Iran was deposed by a fundamentalist Islamic uprising. On 14 February, Adolph "Spike" Dubs, the American ambassador to Afghanistan, was kidnapped by purported Shiite zealots attempting to gain release of a Shiite activist. The rescue attempt, led by Khalqi elements of the army, was bungled and Dubs was killed.[18] The Carter Administration was outraged and subsequently cut off aid to Afghanistan.

In March, Islamic religious leaders called for a jihad against the regime.

Shiite rebels heeding the call attacked PDPA officials in Herat, a western Afghan administrative and economic center. The army garrison there, caught up in the fervor, joined in the riotous crowds and hunted down the Khalqi and their Soviet advisors. As many as one hundred government operatives were murdered. The Soviets publicly blamed Iran, Pakistan and China for the bloodshed and evacuated noncombatants from Afghanistan. Subsequently, military advisors were introduced into the Afghan army down to the battalion level. However, internal party problems in Afghanistan arose again and forced the Soviets to begin to seek an alternative to the Khalqi regime.[19]

In early September of 1979, Taraki arrived in Havana and delivered a speech to the Nonaligned Congress. On his way back to Kabul, he stopped in Moscow where he met with General Secretary Breshnev, Foreign Minister Gromyko and Breshnev's foreign affairs advisor. In spite of the Afghan leader's failings, Breshnev considered him a comrade. After Taraki's return to Kabul, his foreign minister, Hafizullah Amin, led a palace coup and took over the duties of General Secretary of the PDPA. The Soviets, lacking intelligence and understanding of the internecine problems in the PDPA, failed to anticipate the coup. Thus, the Soviet leadership found itself paralyzed by poor prior planning caused by a lack of balanced information. Amin was unknown to the Soviet leadership, and his drive for dominance in Afghanistan was motivated by a tribal pursuit of power, not by any desire to further the teachings of Lenin.[20]

In order to gain first hand information about the situation in Afghanistan, the Soviets sent a select Ministry of Defense advisory group to Kabul in April of 1979. The head of this group was General Pavlovskiy, the commander of Warsaw Pact forces during the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. His alter ego was General Epishev of the Main Political Directorate. The information provided by this group, molded and interpreted by its leadership, became critical. Based on this information and the subsequent unfolding of events from April to September,

Leonid Breshnev apparently took the coup as a personal insult.[21]

The Pavlovskiy/Epishev report took on more significance with each event in Afghanistan. The debate began inside the Soviet desicionmaking apparatus but in an abnormal fashion. Limited, unbalanced information was given directly to Breshnev. Epishev suggested to Breshnev that a limited incursion of Soviet troops might be required to stabilize the situation. This opinion was completely contrary to the consensual position of the senior military leaders, but because of the rank and position of Pavlovskiy and Epishev, the debate was contained within a small group of the ruling elites. The normal fact gathering process and strenuous studies more typical of Soviet decisionmaking methodology simply did not occur. The normal processing of information up and across the channels of bureaucracy was short circuited.[22]

A critical event occurred when on October 8, 1979, Amin ordered the death of Taraki. Breshnev and the ruling elites felt compelled to react and directed the development of a game plan to regain control in Afghanistan. However, the specter of Czechoslovakia loomed over the situation. The same actors were present, but the theater had changed. What was more significant was that the script had changed, as well, but the actors did not recognize this fact. Unlike Czechoslovakia, where coalition, civilian and military factions conducted lengthy debate on the decision to invade, only limited, unbalanced information provided primarily by high level military people shaped the debate relative to Afghanistan.[23] What emerged was a small group of actors presiding over an intense debate at the highest level of the Soviet military establishment.

Soviet foreign policy normally did not evolve from a single actor but from the process of interaction among senior decisionmakers in the Politburo and heads of other political elites. This interaction did not happen with the Afghanistan situation. The otherwise methodical, plodding, cautious process was circumvented and the normal constitutional process was bypassed.[24] Several

critical interrelated factors contributed to the breakdown of the Soviet national security decisionmaking system.

The most critical of these factors were the personalities of the governmental elites. Leonid Breshnev clearly was the dominant actor in the Soviet national security decisionmaking apparatus. By law, there was no predesignated position of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. The High Command and Commander-in-Chief were distinct functions with the latter being appointed by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. This appointment was historically secret. But in 1977, Breshnev became Chairman of the Presidium, assumed the military rank of Marshall, became Chairman of the Defense Council and was formally and publicly announced as Commander-in-Chief.[25]

Breshnev now held a viselike grip on the decisionmaking process. As General Secretary of the Communist Party, he controlled all party agencies including the Politburo. As Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, he, in essence, had himself appointed as Commander-in-Chief and Chairman of the Defense Council. As Commander-in-Chief, he had virtual control of all military actions, directly influencing doctrine, organization and readiness. Most significantly, however, was his Chairmanship of the Defense Council which meant, in turn, that each member, in one way or another, owed his position of power to Breshnev. Further, with the Soviet leader holding so many separate positions himself, each member of the Defense Council was accountable to Breshnev, not to a separate entity of government that may have provided a counterbalance to the decisionmaking process relative to Afghanistan.. The end result of this interlocking of positions, structures and personalities was the creation of a closed segment of government that became immune to the very checks and balances of a system created to avoid just that occurrence.

Just as critical in the decision process was the information fed into this enclave of power. The predominant figure was General Pavlovskiy. His reports

were provided to the Minister of Defense and the General Secretary. His initial report in April of 1979 touched off an acrimonious and divisive debate in the Ministry Of Defense. Marshalls Ogarkov and Achremeev, the brightest and most capable of the Soviet military leadership were vehemently opposed to the use of troops in Afghanistan.[26] Their feelings were that a Soviet presence would result in an increase in rebel activity, not a decrease. The rebel attacks, they believed, would not be directed at the Afghan regime but at the Soviet Army invaders.[27] Ogarkov and Achromeev could not sway the decision process, because the debate was contained in the office of the Minister of Defense and because there were no reports of any significance to counter Pavlovskiy's version of the situation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a natural counterbalance to the military in Soviet affairs, had to rely on Ambassador Puyanov for its information. Puyanov was, at best, unreliable because of chronic alcoholism. The KGB had relied for years on Taraki as the conduit of intelligence from Afghanistan and had failed to establish a strong organization independent of the PDPA. The inability of the civilian sector of the Soviet government to gather reliable information and formulate its own policy recommendations for Breshnev led directly to the development of flawed policy based on unbalanced information and a lack of consensus in the government.

In mid-October of 1979, General Pavlovskiy returned from another visit to Afghanistan with a very pessimistic report. Despite the pleadings of Foreign Minister Gromyko to debate the issue in the Supreme Soviet, Breshnev contained the debate to the Defense Council.[28] It was this small part of the Soviet government which , based on the information provided by Pavlovskiy, decided to unseat Hafizullah Amin, install Babrak Karmal as the new General Secretary of the reunified PDPA and use Soviet troops to gain time for the new regime to rebuild its army.[29] Without consultation with the Supreme Soviet, the Presidium, the Politburo or Central Committee, Leonid Breshnev and the members of the Defense Council ordered the invasion of Afghanistan. Once the decision was made,

democratic centralism took over, and the decision of the highest entity of government was unanimously adopted by each lower body. The debate was over.

The Outcome

On Christmas Eve of 1979, Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan. Hafizullah Amin was hunted down and assassinated, and Babrak Karmal was brought back from exile and installed as the leader of Afghanistan. Initially the plan was for the Soviet troops to be billeted in Kabul and only use their weapons in an emergency. But the reaction of the Afghan people precluded inactivity. The inept Afghan army was unable to secure the situation and the burden of fighting fell on the Red Army.[30]

The invasion changed Soviet relations with the rest of the world for the next ten years. Soviet actions affected the reaction of the United States in Poland in 1980 and 1981, ended detente, and provided impetus for rearmament in the United States and the development of Rapid Deployment Force.[31]

The Soviet invasion did not quell the uprising or eliminate the counterinsurgency. Babrak Karmal could not unify the PDPA and resorted to continuing a repressive rule. The Afghan Army was decimated in the purges and was unable to operate effectively. The Soviets had to train a new officer corps, and in the interim, had to carry the burden of fighting. The Soviets underestimated the resilience of the enemy, and by using Central Asians in the invasion force, opened ancient ethnic wounds. From 1980 to 1985, the Soviets floundered militarily, because the Red Army was trained and equipped to fight on the plains of Russia and northern Europe against a NATO coalition, not the deserts and mountains of Afghanistan against an illusive band of terrorists.

Leonid Breshnev died in 1982 and for the next three years there was no focused leadership in the Soviet Union. When Mikhail Gorbachev became General

Secretary, the entire character of the war changed and efforts began to withdraw Soviet forces from the quagmire.

The Soviets did not learn the lessons of Vietnam or the "Great Game." The legacy of nine years of trying to correct a mistake was five million Afghan refugees, 63,000 Soviet casualties, the waste of billions of rubles and an international arena changed forever.[32]

THE ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON, 1982

Israeli National Security Decisionmaking System

> "Whatever its guiding ideology, whatever its domestic political makeup, and no matter what historical legacy hangs over the minds of its policy makers, the Jewish State's conduct, like that of her own adversaries, remains motivated chiefly by patently anarchic nature of regional and wider international environment in which it has existed since its inception."[33]

Israel is a nation wrenched from the grasp of colonization and ancient rivalry. The migration of peoples of every culture, bound by a common religion, throughout the twentieth century created a volatile nation within a volatile region. The following paragraphs will outline the structure and character of Israeli national security decisionmaking by examining the historical development of the Israeli government, the phenomenon of factionalism in Israeli politics, and, of major significance, the involvement of the military establishment in the Israeli political system.

Beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, the migration of Jewish settlers to the British protectorate of Palestine began in earnest. These early settlers were predominantly European, and, more specifically of Russian descent. David Ben Gurion, the father of Israel, was a professed Bolshevik who modified his views over time to develop a thriving democracy in Israel. His attraction to communism was its appeal as an engine of change for social well-being, not as a domineering form of government. His experience and cultural background,

however, left the fingerprints of Russia and Bolshevism on the developing Israeli government.

Political socialization of the early Israeli leaders took place within the context of the Russian revolution. These courageous adventurers adapted the lessons learned from this experience to Zionism. The preeminent lesson absorbed was the principle of constructing effective political power within an organizational framework which bestows power on those who have power, thus developing elitist leadership.[35]

The first functional political faction to develop among the Russian emigres was the Adhut Haavada in 1919. This organization recognized the importance of developing a military arm subordinated to the civilian government. This relationship established civilian control of the military but developed the military to guarantee the security of civilian government.[36] The Haganah, the forerunner of today's Israeli Defense Force (IDF), was this supporting military arm. As political factions flourished in the developing Israeli national organization, the Mapai faction became the point of allegiance for many of the officers of Haganah. This faction was the forerunner of the Labor party, which was to control Israeli politics for nearly fifty years.

As a result, the military establishment of Israel is inextricably interwoven with the political activity of the nation. This is natural. According to one Israeli analyst, the civilianization of the military elite and its entry into the higher echelons of political life are recognized phenomena where the armed forces have joined the struggle of national liberation. In 1948 when independence was declared, the IDF was the first institution to be nationalized through universal conscription, thus giving every Israeli citizen a stake in the security of the state.[37]

Israel's political landscape is characterized as multi-factional with two

major parties dominating the ruling coalitions. These parties are the Likud and the Israeli Labor Party. There is no written constitution in Israel. However, the Knesset, the unicameral representative legislative body of 120 seats, has passed nine basic laws that delineate rights and responsibilities within Israeli government. Instead of a "Bill of Rights", a strong, independent court system safeguards the rights of the residents of Israel.[38]

The majority party or coalition (that party or coalition with the most seats in the Knesset) forms a government and appoints a cabinet. Usually one cabinet portfolio is awarded for every three or four Knesset seats a faction or party holds. Intense political bargaining determines who gets what. The cabinet is confirmed by the Knesset and is responsible to that body. The cabinet is also the top executive policymaking body and the center of political power in the nation.

Within the two dominant parties the evolution of party ideology followed predominantly cultural lines. The Labor party is dominated by Askenazic Jews. These are Jews of European or American descent who were the founding fathers of the nation. These men brought with them the ideology of Bolshevism and helped form a political system characterized by distinctly Russian and Leninist traits with pragmatism and patience the bywords of Labor Government. The Askenazim are the ruling elite. The Likud party is dominated by Sephardic Jews. These Jews are of Asian and North African descent. They came to Israel later and inherited the political system and society developed by their European predecessors. The Sephardim gravitated, in most cases, to the lower class levels of the society and developed a natural rivalry with the Askenazim. The Sephardim sustained a higher birthrate than the Askenazim and now claim fifty-five percent of the population. The Likud are traditionally conservative in both domestic and foreign policy matters.[39]

The most significant aspect of the Israeli governmental process is factionalism in the multiparty system. The system is dominated by factions that

constantly maneuver between the major parties to gain position and power. While the resolution of interfactional conflict is intended to produce consensus on policy issues, the unintended result is that the government's flexibility in policy making becomes constrained.[40] The outcome then is that a strong minority bloc can control events while other factions either opt out or get shut out, because they cannot counterbalance the strength of the bloc.

Israel, then, is governed by a representative legislature with a multitude of constituencies. The military establishment is intimately involved in politics. Though subordinated to civilian control, the military clearly led the way to independence and serves as the agent of assimilation for Israeli society. The government of Israel is characterized by a heritage of ruling elitism perpetuated by economically, ethnically and ideologically separated parties. The cabinet, the domain of the ruling elites, ideally offers a system of checks, balances and consensus.

Strategic Setting

Lebanon was a French protectorate from 1920 to 1943, when independence was granted. The government of Lebanon was modeled after the French republican model. Because of the diverse and conflicting cultural composition of Lebanon, the positions of power in the government were appointed according to a 1932 census. The major divisions were, and are, Christians (Maronites) and Muslims (Sunni, Shia and Druze) even though 90% of the population is Arab.

The Christian population, dominant at the time of the census, is comprised of strong, militant families, each representing their own interests within the political structure. The Muslim population is not cohesive at all, but all sects, in their own way are opposed to the dominating Christian families.[41] The mixture is volatile and extremely unstable, even today. Political leadership in Lebanon has

been handed from family to family with the two strongest families being the Gemayels and the Chamouns.

The seeds of Israeli involvement with Lebanon were sown in 1919 when the provisional northern border of Israel was argued by the World Zionst Organization before the Paris Peace Conference.[42] As Israel moved toward independence in the 1940's, the provisional government sought friendly terms with the newly independent Lebanon. However, Sheik Pierre Gemayel, founder of the Phalange faction of the Maronite community and Lebanese head of state, was lukewarm to Zionist overtures. Though Christian in belief, the Lebanese were ethnically Arab and felt allegiance to their Arab neighbors.

For security reasons Israel intended to form a friendship with its neighbor to the north. It became clear as early as 1950, however, that a Lebanon under Christian control would still be an Arab nation to be dealt with and not trusted.[43] Nevertheless, the Israeli political leaders continued to hold to the misguided hope of turning Lebanon into a Christian satellite of Israel. With continuous internecine violence due to the lack of a strong central government in Lebanon, that leadership should have dropped any illusion about harmony in the north.

If the violence in Lebanon was not enough to convince Israel of the futility of their previous policies, the development of the greatest threat to regional stability should have forewarned Israel of coming difficulties. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was formed by Gamal Abdul Nasser in Egypt in 1964. This organization would play a major role in Israeli history, particularly relative to the Lebanon scenario, in later years. The expressed objective of the PLO was to keep constant pressure on Israel, even in times of cease-fire between Israel and its Arab adversaries. The Egyptian PLO was corrupt and hyperactive, but the Fateh faction, formed in Syria, was quite another issue. Serious and dedicated, the Fateh was organized and led by professionals like the engineer Yasar Arafat. The actions and reactions of the Fateh led directly to the Six Day War of 1967.[44]

The war of 1967 was a seminal event in the Israeli-Arab conflict and would set the stage for further difficulties directly related to Lebanon. The lightening quick victory of Israeli forces was measured as a great victory. Yet the capture of territory and the utter destruction of Arab militaries led to unforeseen internal political problems. The occupied territories (Sinai, Gaza, Golan Heights, the West Bank) forced the Israeli government to deal with 1,000,000 Arabs now contained in a new Israel. Israel was not equipped to deal with these lands with civilian agencies. That situation left the administration of the occupied territories in the hands of the IDF. Now, the IDF not only had a voice in security matters but in domestic issues, as well.[45]

The activities of the PLO reached a peak in September of 1970 with the hijacking of three airliners, all forced to fly to Jordan. King Hussein, the Hashemite monarch of Jordan, could no longer withstand international political pressure and expelled the PLO. Arafat and his forces migrated to Lebanon. Israel pressured Lebanon to keep the PLO in check, but the weak central government of Lebanon was powerless against the PLO and was forced to accept the presence of the region's most destabilizing faction.[46]

In October 1973, an Arab coalition led by Egypt and Syria attacked Israel. After several days of heavy fighting, a cease-fire was obtained with combatants aligned status quo ante bellum. The aftershock of the war in Israel was traumatic, however. The surprise and subsequent loss of life took a heavy toll on the government of Labor's Golda Meir and laid the groundwork for the rise of the Likud party to power.

The internal problems precipitated by the 1973 Yom Kippur war in the Labor government blinded its leadership to changes in demographics, sentiment about the occupied territories and popular opinion concerning the Lebanese civil war. Instead of decisive, pragmatic decisionmaking (characteristics of past governments), the Labor government dealt with each incident perpetrated by the

PLO ad hoc and incrementally in the aftermath of the 1973 conflict. When Syria entered the Beqaa Valley of Lebanon in 1976 under the guise of restoring peace and order to Lebanon, Israel added the threat of a more proximate archenemy in the region to that of a resurgent PLO. Israel was forced to deal with a direct threat to security or accept an untenable situation in Lebanon.[47] In the eyes of the Israeli people, the Labor party was no longer fit to govern. After 50 years of political dominance, the Labor party was deposed and the Likud party came to power.

Following the National elections in May of 1977, Menachem Begin led the Likud coalition to a 62-58 margin in the Knesset. After another conservative bloc joined the Likud coalition, Begin built a cabinet founded on 77 seats. Begin was a hard-line nationalist with hawkish views who had served with the breakaway military faction Irgun during the war of independence before eventually assuming the leadership of the Likud coalition.[48]

The Likud leadership was experienced in politics but not government. For a newly elected party to succeed in a multiparty system it needs a solid parliamentary base, an ideologically close coalition, a strong leadership and a legitimacy with the people, a tradition of party discipline and an ability to influence key decision centers.[49] The Likud had only strong leadership. Factionalism undermined every other requirement for the Likud to succeed. The new ruling coalition was unprepared to run the country.

The difficulties of learning to govern and the strong Labor voices still in the government kept the Likud government's policy toward Lebanon incoherent. When Anwar Sadat, the leader of Egypt, sued for a separate peace in November of 1978, however, Begin and the Likud government seized the opportunity to eliminate a major threat to Israel through peaceful means. In the euphoria of this windfall for Israeli security, Begin revived the dream of a Christian satellite to the North, thus eliminating through political means the enduring threat of the PLO and the Syrian occupation force.

The Decision

The election of the Tenth Knesset in June 1981 saw the Likud coalition hold only 61 of the 120 seats. Traditionally, such a narrow margin would have moderated the positions of the ruling coalition. However, due to a terribly fationalized opposition, the Likud did not feel compelled to accommodate Labor or anyone else. This phenomenon led to a very tight knit, hawkish Likud bloc in the cabinet with no effective opposition.[50] From this government emerged five key individuals.

The leader was Prime Minister Menachem Begin. He possessed a very simple view of the world that included the goal of Eratz Israel (Greater Israel). Begin was not comfortable in military affairs and deferred to experts. Though a tough politician, the new leader was at times naive. He felt the PLO constituted as great a threat as the Nazis.

A strong Begin ally was Yitzak Shamir, the foreign minister. He was a belligerent hard-liner who never brought, or perhaps even understood, the broader political aspects of problems that confronted Israel to any discussion. The third party was Moshe Arens, also a Begin ally and ambassador to the United States. Fourth was Lt. Gen. Rafael Eitan, the Chief of Staff of the IDF and an ultraconservative, who believed the war for Israeli Independence was not over. He was obedient and owed allegiance to the Likud for his promotion to Chief of Staff.[51]

The most important member of this inner circle was Ariel Sharon.. He was an accomplished battlefield commander, responsible for some of Israel's greatest military victories. His foolhardiness and zeal led to some of Israel's most embarrassing memories, as well. At times, Sharon was as great a political liability as he was a brave soldier primarily because of his political activism and

his hunger for power. In 1974 for example, he advocated that governmental reform be enacted so generals (including himself, of course) could rule the country.[52]

In Begin's first government, Sharon administered the occupied territories and actively encouraged their settlement. In the second Likud government, he was appointed the Minister of Defense, a position he had long coveted, and then proceeded to make the IDF his personal instrument of power. Begin, who could freeze a dissenter with a withering stare, was overawed by Sharon's very presence. The Israeli leader would never have thought to challenge his Minister of Defense on any military matter and considered no one else Sharon's equal in this arena--a situation captured in one report of the environment in Begin's second government:

> From the day he . . . entered the defense ministry in early August 1981, Sharon strove to eliminate the traditional mechanisms that mitigated or blocked the government's natural propensity toward extremism. The delicately crafted system of checks and balances that had obtained to one degree or another in all of Israel's previous governments - largely because of the presence of ministers with military experience-was conspicuously absent in this one. Other cabinets had always comprised ministers espousing a variety of views on defense questions, thereby providing a sense of equilibrium in the decisionmaking process. These five senior officials operated within the bounds of a closed ideological system that enabled each one to reinforce the others with well-worn articles of faith that could close their minds to the counsel of the experts serving them. Moreover, with Sharon becoming Defense Minister, one of the last counterweights to this five man juggernaut was removed.[53]

The only cabinet member with extensive military experience other than Sharon was Mordechai Zippori of the Labor party, Begin's deputy Prime Minister. A bluff, no nonsense man, he continually challenged Sharon; but, with the opposition paralyzed by factionalism, he was unable to contain the Likud minority.[54]

PLO activities in the north of Israel were disrupting stability and security in the villages and settlements in Galilee. Sharon had always envisioned a new order

in Lebanon. He arranged a meeting between Begin and the Christian leaders from Lebanon, Bashir Gemayel and Danny Chamoun. Begin was moved by their seemingly strong appreciation that Israel was the only party in the Middle East sympathetic to their cause.[55] Sharon took advantage of Begin's favorable meeting and convinced the Prime minister of the need to eliminate the PLO from south Lebanon.

As a result of the meeting, both Begin and Sharon developed concepts of what should be done in Lebanon. Begin wanted the IDF to eliminate the PLO from south Lebanon so the villages and settlements of Galilee would be safe from terrorism. He did not want a change of government in Lebanon nor a fight with the Syrians in the Beqaa Valley. Begin believed Israel would be supported by the United States in developing a security zone in Lebanon, particularly with Alexander Haig as Secretary of State.

Sharon's vision was quite different. In one telling blow, he wanted to annihilate the PLO, force political upheaval and push Syria out of the Beqaa. After completion of the military operation, he wanted to establish a Christian government friendly to Israel. Sharon believed such an operation could be done with minimum casualties. With a swift victory, Israel would regain national pride and status.[56]

The mutual interest of the Israeli government and the Lebanese Christians was the PLO. The Israelis wanted the PLO removed from Lebanon for obvious security reasons. The Maronites wanted the PLO eliminated, because the Syrian forces would then have no legitimacy in terms of peace keeping.

Lacking constraints, Sharon directed the planning of an invasion of Lebanon. One plan, Little Pines, was for an incursion to clear a forty kilometer belt on the northern border with operations strictly controlled to avoid conflict with Syria. This concept coincided with the vision of Begin. Another plan, Big Pines, encompassed a massive assault, a sweep north to Beirut and a subsequent

clearing the Beqaa Valley of Syrian forces. This operational design coincided with the vision of Sharon.

On 20 December 1981, Sharon briefed Big Pines to the Cabinet. The members were stunned and flatly rejected the proposal. Sharon's reaction to this rebuff was to prevent all information concerning Israeli military plans for Lebanon from going to the Cabinet or the press.[57]

With strict information controls in place, only the five man inner circle orchestrated subsequent events. This group represented less than ten percent of the population but dominated policy development and decisionmaking. Factionalism and lack of access to critical information made it impossible for opposition members of the cabinet to counterbalance the inner circle. Under these conditions, the national consensus on security broke down.[58]

In early 1982, the chief of Israeli Military Intelligence visited the US Secretary of State, Alexander Haig. He briefed the Secretary on Little Pines and returned to Israel. However, the American press uncovered the visit. On an 8 April national news broadcast, John Chancellor of NBC news outlined Little Pines, thus indicating that the American government knew and approved of the operation. Begin interpreted Haig's reaction as tacit approval for Little Pines. Now Begin, Sharon and Eitan were looking for an excuse to execute.[59]

During a 10 May cabinet meeting, Sharon briefed Little Pines but used maps that described Big Pines. Only the chiefs of Israeli military intelligence and Mossad, both military officers, challenged Sharon. They did not debate the military concept proposed by Sharon but questioned his assessment of the reliability of the Maronites and, in particular, Bashir Gemayel's Phalange militia. Sharon's personality overwhelmed the dissenters and agreement was reached on the Little Pines contingency. By that time, Sharon had already decided that he would expand the war on his own.[60]

On 3 June 1982, Sharon, Begin and Eitan got their excuse for the invasion. The

Israeli ambassador to the United Kingdom was attacked in London. The attack, ordered by Abu Nidal, was intended to bring pressure on Nidal's archnemesis, Yassar Arafat. In this he was successful. Sharon seized on the event to instigate actions that would lead to an invasion. In subsequent cabinet meetings, only Little Pines was discussed, and by a vote of 14-2, its execution was approved.[61] Nevertheless, on 6 June the Israeli Minister of Defense initiated Big Pines in the form of Operation Peace for Galilee. As a result, a massive three division force crossed the line of departure in broad daylight with special forces and engineers in the lead echelons.

A small subgroup (Sharon, Begin, Eitan, Arens and Shamir) of the collective decisionmaking body deceived the larger group and proceeded on a course that would permanently tarnish Israel's international reputation. Now the cabinet was forced to go along with the fait accompli because inaction was perceived as being worse than continuing to fight. Only Mordechai Zippori spoke out against the actions being forced by Sharon. Begin, having told the President of the United States the objectives were limited, became a victim of his own naivete'.[62]

The Outcome

The weight of effort was enormous--far more than what was needed to accomplish the objectives of Little Pines which were achieved early on. Sharon personally directed the IDF to continue operations that far exceeded the objectives that had been briefed to the cabinet. The Israeli forces encountered and fought Syrian forces on 6 June, entered Beirut on 10 June, captured the Beirut-Damascus road on 14 June and penetrated the Green Line in Beirut on 19 June. All of these actions were contrary to what the cabinet had agreed should be the objectives of the operation. With each step, Sharon forced Begin and the cabinet to agree with his actions or face the probability of high casualties, the

single most emotional security issue in Israel.[63]

Once the IDF was committed across the Lebanese border, the senior military leadership felt compelled to finish the job. Thus, Little Pines turned inexorably into Big Pines. Once the true intent was known, the Knesset, cabinet and military support began to unravel. As the operation became bogged down, the threat of outside intervention as well as the specter of unacceptable economic and social costs began to weigh more heavily in decisionmaking. By August 12, Sharon was divested of ministerial power in the cabinet.[64]

All during the siege of Beirut, Bashir Gemayel, Arab Christian Phalangist and suitor of Menachem Begin, courted Yassar Arafat and refused to help the IDF as promised. The Israelis fell victim to the deceit of the Lebanese Maronites. Even though the PLO had taken a fearsome beating in the field and had been forced to evacuate Lebanon, Israel's heavy handed aggression had won more politically for the PLO than could have been gained on the battlefield.[65]

On 23 August, Bashir Gemayel was elected President of Lebanon and publicly declared he would follow the course of other Arab nations. The last vestige of tacit approval for the invasion was removed once and for all. However, Lebanese politics were unpredictable and dangerous.

On the afternoon of 14 September, Bashir Gemayel was blown to pieces. The reaction to his assassination was brutal. On the evening of 16 September, Phalangist elements of the Lebanese Army entered the Palestinian refugee camps of Shatilla and Sabra. These forces set about methodically murdering the residents. Although in the area, the IDF failed to protect these people and bore the blame for the massacres. The government report of the investigation of the event led to the decline of the Begin government, the dismissal of Sharon and the retirement of Eitan. When considering the events of recent history in his country, Begin reflected that Israel's involvement in Lebanon was like Soviet involvement in Eastern Europe.[66] It would have been instructive for the Prime Minister to

examine the Soviet's ongoing experience in Afghanistan.

The invasion of Lebanon and the subsequent events had serious ramifications for Israel's international and domestic political situations. Although the PLO was virtually eliminated militarily, they gained politically because of Israel's offensive actions. The Syrian position in Lebanon was strengthened, because the myth of invincibility of the IDF was removed and the Lebanese government remained weak. The Camp David accords were undermined, because Israel's actions were contrary to the intent of the agreement. Domestically, the Likud government's actions created a deeper chasm between the Sephardic Jews who supported the Likud and the Askenazic Jews who traditionally supported the Labor party.[57]

Israeli national security decisionmaking was vested in the cabinet formed by the majority coalition. The system was intended to provide for broad representation of constituencies in Israel's political environment. However, because multifactionalism provided a voice for everyone, its existence in Israeli politics exposed a serious flaw in the national security decisionmaking apparatus. Because the opposition members of Begin's second cabinet could not reach consensus on the direction of Israeli policy vis a vis Lebanon, a small inner circle of Zionist zealots controlled information and did not allow the cabinet to interact to avoid an ill-defined and ill-conceived national security policy. The naivete' of the Prime Minister and the insatiable appetite for power of Ariel Sharon became the primary factors supporting the execution of Peace for Galilee. The deception of the cabinet, the Israeli people and the international community led inexorably to the undermining of confidence in the government and a tarnished international reputation. Blind zealotry cost Israel 600 dead and 3,000 wounded.[58]

LESSONS AND IMPLICATIONS

As the Prussian philosopher of war Carl Von Clausewitz reminds us, "The maximum use of force is in no way incompatible with simultaneous use of the intellect."[69] In both cases discussed in this study, viable governments with seemingly sound mechanisms to preclude ill-fated decisions failed in just that area. Thousands of volumes fill the libraries and bookcases of American decisionmakers but very few of those volumes address the intricacies of national security decisionmaking in other nations. What should strike the reader first and hardest from reviewing the two cases is that these nations should have known better, but something or someone got in the way.

"No one starts a war--or rather, no one in his senses ought to do--without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it."[70] This passage from Clausewitz's On War, when applied to the cases presented in this study, begs the question: What were the objectives of the Soviet Union and Israel as they contemplated war? Both nations rushed to decision without understanding the potential outcomes of their actions. The two governments shared many characteristics. Both were dominated by ruling elites--elites not elected by national mandate but by the representative organs of government that bestowed power on those that ruled. Information was the fuel and lubricant of the system. Information, processed and synthesized, allowed for balanced positions to be distilled.

Both systems had to contend with factionalism that ideally would provide consensus and checks and balances. In reality, the factionalism isolated or eliminated perspective. As Clausewitz implies, without proper perspective a nation cannot properly outline its objectives. Without clearly articulated objectives, the nation cannot possibly decide on how best to fight or whether to

fight at all. Broader debate would certainly have led to better definitions of objectives. Perhaps each nation and its leaders would have been spared the embarrassment of failure had they allowed the national security decisionmaking systems to work as they were designed. By controlling information, small subgroups of the larger systems exposed flaws in the decisionmaking process that were not previously visible to either those individuals involved in decisionmaking or those outside observing the unfolding events.

The Soviets did not understand the situation in Afghanistan. They believed this was yet another Hungary or Czechoslovakia. The decisionmakers discounted culture, religion, geography, heritage and their own doctrine. The Soviet national security decisionmaking system failed, because key individuals were vested with too much power. This led to curtailed debate and the inhibition of a broader consensus.

The Israelis wanted something that could never be--a Christian satellite in the north. An inexperienced Israeli government misread the Maronites, the Syrians, the PLO and the United States. The system of checks and balances failed. Factionalism at the seat of power allowed a hard-line minority bloc to determine the direction of a nation. As a consequence, the actions of the Israelis in 1981 and 1982 were out of character--planning for an offensive operation and the capture of an Arab capital.

Both nations were guilty of not just bad decisions, but also of being unaware their respective systems had let them down. The latter is more damnable than the former. Bad decisions, then, were inevitable.

Clausewitz further warns that, "We can now see that the assertion that a major military development, or the plan for one, should be a matter of purely military opinion is unacceptable and can be damaging."[71] By depending on purely military opinions, both the Soviet and Israeli national security decisionmaking systems were short-circuited. The primary reason in both cases was that the

military establishment controlled the vital information that normally reduced friction in the system. This led to a few decisionmakers being provided unbalanced and incomplete positions on matters of vital interest. Had other constituencies in either case been involved, war might not have been avoided, but the risks of war would have been thoroughly debated. In the Soviet case, the military was opposed to the invasion, but selected information provided by soldiers who were victims of their own experience shaped the unfortunate decision of the Defense Council. Other segments of the Soviet system, such as the foreign ministry and the KGB, failed to gather their own information. With no information of their own, these agencies had to rely on very parochial intelligence. No counter positions could be developed. In Israel, the activity of the Defense Minister and the Chief of Staff of the IDF, ignoring the tenets of civilian control of the military, executed their own plan for their own ends. The overreliance on military opinion was symptomatic of the flaws in the national security decisionmaking systems that caused breakdown in national consensus.

"If a policy is right, that is, successful," Clausewitz emphasized, "any intentional effect it has on the conduct of war can only be good. If it has the opposite effect, the policy itself is wrong."[72] In both cases, bad decisions in terms of war led to bad policy. The actions of two great nations, so poorly thought out, caused totally predictable reactions. In both cases, the enemies were deified in the international arena and gained politically what they could not possibly have gained on the battlefield. Both the Soviet Union and Israel faced vilification internationally. In addition, there was the human, economic and social costs internal to each nation. Both wars were decidedly unpopular and exacted the ultimate price from each ruler. Menachem Begin resigned a confused and disconsolate man. Leonid Breshnev died knowing he had presided over a decision that was wrong. For the USSR in particular, the invasion may well have been one of the seminal events in the collapse of the Soviet empire.

One lesson that stands out in both cases is that all national security decisionmaking systems may contain flaws that, when exposed, may lead to disastrous decisions. Regardless of the checks and balances in place, sometimes things can go dreadfully wrong. It was not the intention of either the Soviet Union and Israel to fail in their invasions, but the decision for the invasions should have been better considered. A flaw in the Soviet system was the vesting of too much authority in one individual. Breshnev controlled too many of the critical conduits of information. By force of personality and a system based on democratic centralism, the General Secretary became his own worst impediment in reaching a sound decision. Had he allowed the debate to unfold similarly to the one that accompanied the decision to invade Czechoslovakia, the decision to fight in Afghanistan would have been dramatically different. In Israel, the critical impediment to sound decisionmaking was factionalism. Instead of providing the system of checks and balances characteristic of parliamentary governments, factionalism actually paralyzed the governmental process, particularly in national security decisionmaking.

Another lesson derived from the cases, though not new, concerns the interaction between military and political activity. In today's ever shrinking world, Clausewitz's point that war is politics by other means takes on a new connotation. The clearly defined line between military and political action is blurred today, particularly when a nation confronts a limited war scenario. A political action may precipitate a military action which, in turn, may have long lasting political ramifications. In the Afghanistan situation, the Soviet leadership which had dealt with Czechoslovakia relatively well, relied on past experience to help determine its course of action. Marshalls such as Ogarkov and Achromeev who correctly predicted the adverse political effects of the invasion were disregarded. Breshnev and the others could not see that Afghanistan was different. In Israel's case, there was only one ex-soldier in the opposition bloc of

the cabinet. He was unable to educate his allies or to dissuade the Likud inner circle from forcing the execution of Little Pines. Had Mordechai Zippori had any assistance from his fellow opposition members, Israel might have been saved from a terrible mistake. Had Menachim Begin been more militarily aware, perhaps he would not have been so influenced by Ariel Sharon. The military establishment and political leaders must appreciate the military as an instrument of national power.

If, in today's environment, the United States is to engage early and decisively in times of developing crisis, national security decisionmakers must be knowledgeable of not only who is making decisions in other nations but how those decisions are being made. Decisionmakers must be educated in the ways of nations that are potential allies and adversaries. Their staffs must have intelligence data that properly supports sound decisionmaking. Wargaming situations with trained and educated participants would reduce risks and provide insights into alternative courses of action. It is not enough to know the structure of another nation's government or who occupies what position. American and allied decisionmakers should have taken heed of the interconnection of positions held by Breshnev and should have been sensitive to the effects of having so much power centered in one man. American decisionmakers should have been more sensitive to the makeup of the Israeli cabinet and the internal problems of that governmental body. This is not to say the United States could have forestalled either invasion, but American strategic leaders could have been better prepared to shape the outcomes of both scenarios. A logical follow-on to developing expertise in examining national security decisionmaking in other nations is to share that knowledge with allies. The United States strategic leaders should encourage cooperation in this area.

Finally, the strategic leaders of the United States must conduct a thorough self-examination of this nation's national security decisionmaking process. Israel

and the Soviet Union did not set out to fail. Their misadventures were caused by flaws in their respective decisionmaking systems. Governmental processes that had evolved to provide checks and balances were short-circuited. If such tragic errors could occur in seemingly sound systems, there is nothing to preclude the United States national security decisionmaking system from having fundamental flaws that are obscured by regulatory "safe guards." It would be naive and irresponsible for decisionmakers to believe the national security decisionmaking system of the United States is without fault. Vigilance is the guarantor of peace.

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